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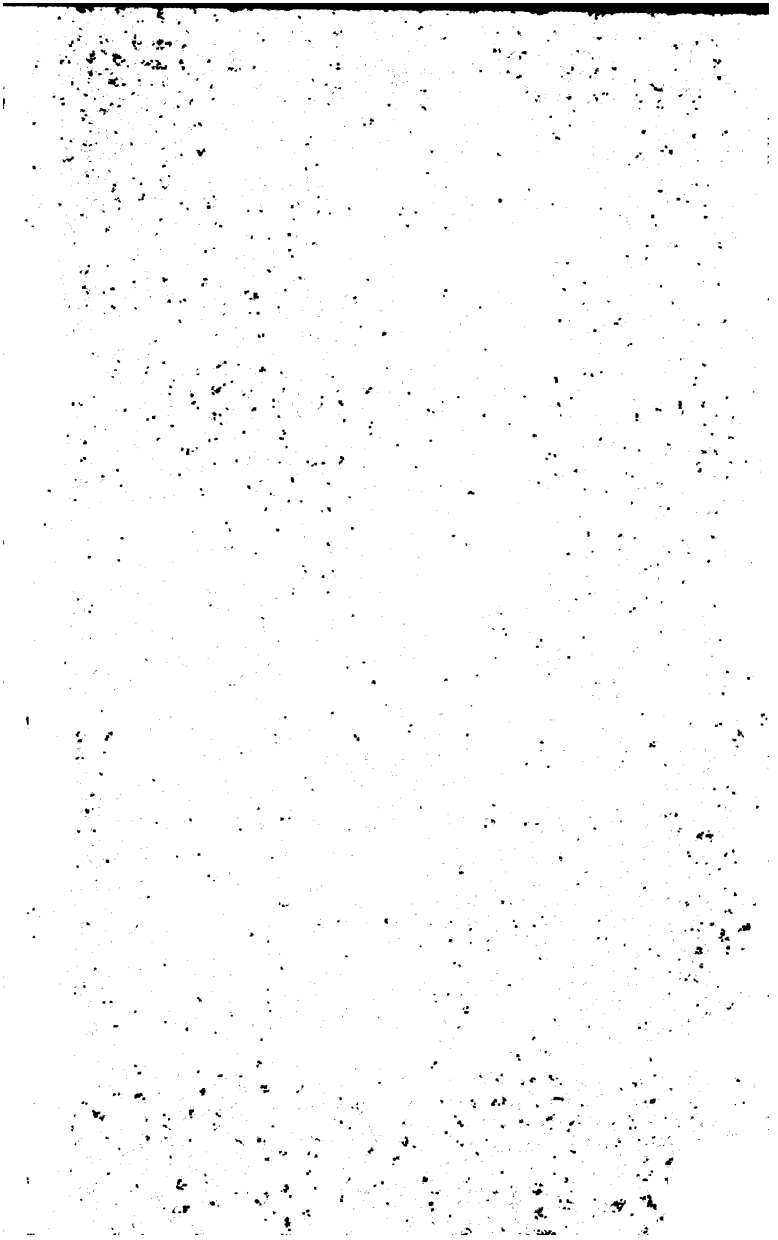

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Reminiscences.

MY

REMINISCENCES

OF

COLONIAL LIFE.

BY

MRS. ANSELL.

ROYSTON:
JOHN WARREN.
1882.

203. g. 440.

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Reminiscences.

Chapter I.

THE VOYAGE OUT.

ALTHOUGH many accounts of Australian and New Zealand life have been written, yet at the suggestion of many friends who think my experience on the voyage out, and life in each of these countries—for a period of 13 years in one, and 12 in the other—would form an amusing tale to some, I venture to put forth this volume, with the hope that it may not be unfavourably received.

In October, 1852, my husband and I took leave of our relatives and friends in Cambridge, and started for London on the 5th of that month. We embarked at Gravesend, on board the good ship *Alipore*, of 1,013 tons burden, having an

excellent captain and officers, who endeavoured to make a voyage half round the world seem as nearly as possible a pleasure trip. For a few days, as we might expect, sea sickness was very prevalent, and many felt deeply grieved at the final parting with dear ones left behind whom they were destined never to see again; but with so much to do in putting things in order, travellers like ourselves have little time to dwell on their past troubles. It is true some give way to grief and sickness during the whole passage, and when they land look a complete wreck, instead of being robust and strong, which in a great measure is their own fault, for it is better to bear up, if possible, and keep a good heart under the circumstances. After leaving Gravesend our journey down channel to Dartmouth was accomplished in a few days, and there we stayed a week at an hotel. What a charming place we thought it, with its lovely harbour and surrounding hills! Many of us wished, in case we should make a fortune in the golden

country, we might return hither and pass the remainder of our days.

Our time having expired for taking in provisions, and such things as were necessary for the voyage, we left that pretty bay amid the booming of guns from our ship, the salute being repeated from those on shore, and echoing among the lovely hills. Handkerchiefs were waved from ship to shore, and eyes were eager to catch the last glimpse till nothing but a mere speck could be seen in the distance; land was soon out of sight, with wind and tide favourable. After passing the Bay of Biscay some days, we encountered a terrific storm, and were compelled to keep within our cabins for some time. Those who have experienced a sea voyage well know that on first starting out, things are not secured in their cabins, and the consequence is such a rolling and tumbling of every movable thing, and the din is horrible. Many passengers were very ill, and wished themselves in Old England, but that was of no use; there was no going out the back

door, and so we made ourselves as happy as we could, under the circumstances.

We found great annoyance from cock-roaches, and our entreaty with the Dutch carpenter to kill them was merely met with the reply "Poor ettle tings, 'ive and et 'ive; won't hurt 'e, can't kill 'em, putty ettle tings." We thought them very ugly, some were as long as the finger. They were perfectly harmless, however, but for the horror of having them creeping about the cabin. Having been at sea a few weeks, we now began to become better acquainted with each other. Mr. and Mrs. J. (the former of whom I had known in London some years previously) really were a very conspicuous couple; Mr. J. looking out of the corners of his eyes and Mrs. J. being very near-sighted. When they examined the pickle bottle it was truly ridiculous! On Sundays service was conducted on the poop (when fine), by the captain, at 11 o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. J. were foremost, dressed out in fashionable style, which was amusing to many.

I must not forget to tell my readers when "crossing the line" (the equator) we were gratified by the presence of Neptune and his wife. They are supposed to come out of the sea over the side of the ship, dressed in a peculiar manner, crawling along the deck at night; Neptune in a sheepskin, and a swab for the tail, and his wife riding on his back, dressed in the same way. They are really two of the sailors. Neptune gruffly asks if there are any friends aboard he has not seen before (who have not crossed the line), if so they must pay a fine or be shaved. When an opportunity offers they lather them and shave them with a hoop iron. The cabin boy, for fear of being shaved, hid himself in the boats or in other places until Neptune was forgotten. This practice I believe is now pretty well stopped, as far as passengers are concerned. For some time we were becalmed at the equator, the ocean was like a sheet of glass, not a ripple to be seen, and we found the continued glare greatly affected our eyes, so

much so, that when we awoke in the morning we could open them with difficulty. Here an immense shark was caught, 12 feet long. Many tasted it for curiosity's sake, but such monsters of the deep I cannot think fit for human food. When sickness is on board they will follow the ship for days, with the small pilot fish as their pioneer, as the shark is devoid of smell, and the eye sight not clear.

On our passage Mrs. W. presented us with a baby girl, which was named after our worthy ship, "Alipore." The mother was a lady of good birth and education, but met with many troubles afterwards in a foreign land. Alas! not many weeks did little Alipore survive the intense heat of Australia. As many of our passengers went out for the purpose of speculating, taking with them wives, most of them newly married, there was but one solitary single maiden on board, Miss B., a very ordinary character, too ill-tempered to be very agreeable. Of course, for amusement's sake, she must be courted by all

the single gentlemen, old or young, which was very offensive to her, and put her into a great rage, when she would throw everything before her; for she positively declared no man should have her hand and heart, for she hated the whole race, and went out there to be alone. I do not suppose any one would have taken her had she given her consent. She had a habit of taking her meals by herself, and sitting at the table, eating, long after the rest had done. Poor lady! Many were the overtures made to her in public, with the object of whiling away the monotony of a sea voyage.

Mr. W., a passenger, Editor of the *Melbourne Herald*, had the honour of taking out the first steam printing press to that place. To cause some diversion, a small newspaper was printed, giving an account of weekly events, many of which were amusing. The principal was "Tipper's Scheme." The enterprising man, "Tipper," wished to purchase, on our arrival at Melbourne, all our ship fittings, to build into small houses for our reception.

Great fun was made of this, by the captain and passengers daily meeting at Tipper's offices (the hospital) with constables and bell, to inscribe each name on a roll of paper, signifying the intention of patronising him, and they would thus enter the office under two or three different names. To make the roll appear large, he got as many names as possible registered, and this scheme perhaps we should not have abused as we did (calling it ridiculous), considering that many in Melbourne were homeless on arrival.

After passing many pleasant days our sorrows came: a sad mutiny broke out, which caused great misery to the captain and officers. The passengers were of course terribly alarmed, but it was occasioned by their own foolishness in giving the sailors intoxicating drink in honor of the New Year, for this made them quarrelsome and disobedient to their officers, and to positively refuse to do their duty. One rough sailor, an American, profusely tattooed with immense figures of women, anchors, and things too numerous to

mention on his arms, flew at the captain like a mad dog, bit his face, and tried to gouge out his eyes. For some weeks afterwards the captain was not fit to be seen, poor man. The carpenter was called to render assistance by the captain, when he was kicked in the chest, and hurt severely. After being well attended to by the doctor and passengers, however, he soon resumed his duties. Three of the crew were captured and placed in irons for the remainder of the voyage. On arriving at William's-Town, two were sentenced to three months' imprisonment, one was liberated, and, our vessel being short of hands, the passengers gladly volunteered to work the ship during the remainder of the passage. This was done for the space of three weeks. Little did we know the danger we had been in when we were told some time afterwards that this sad occurrence took place between the islands of St. Paul and Amsterdam, in the Pacific Ocean.

The 1st of January, 1853—this New Year was ushered in with feelings of grief

and unpleasantness. After being three months at sea we began to wish our journey at an end, and our wishes were soon gratified by seeing the distant land, rising like a thick mist in a cloudless and sunny sky. The delightful scent, as it was wafted across the water from the trees and shrubs, made us, as can well be imagined, charmed with the pleasant change, after being at sea so many months, with nothing to look at but water. As we sailed along the coast, though some miles distant, we passed through innumerable shoals of small fish, so many that we were tired looking at them. Now we came in sight of Port Phillip Heads, a dangerous entrance in stormy weather, but a light-house has been placed on the high rocks close by to warn mariners of the danger. Still as we passed through this entrance, many wrecks were to be seen outside. Having safely arrived in Hobson's Bay, we glided pleasantly along, sheltered by an awning from the scorching sun overhead. We were struck with the view of the grand

mountains in the distance; the Yow-Yangs, Mount Alexander, and the Dandemongs, the beautiful blue from the latter causing much admiration.

Gradually we came to anchor off William's-Town. All for the time were merry with the thought of going on shore, when sad news spread through the ship, viz., that "Happy Jack" had fallen down the hatchway and broken his neck. This sailor was one who was liberated, having been wrongfully accused of the mutiny. The poor man was a native of Yarmouth, and left a young wife and child. His remains were placed in a boat by the sailors, and rowed to shore, where finally they were interred at William's-Town. Passengers now turned their thoughts towards landing, direct, some for one part, some for another. It was useless in those days to think of leaving the ship at once, there being no railway, as now, to Melbourne. The luggage must be taken off the ship in a lighter, be conveyed by the salt water river, and there wait for wind and tide.

This took often three weeks to accomplish. It was a long time to wait, but it could not be helped. At the present time passengers are more fortunate, as the ships come alongside the pier, and away you go in a short time by rail to Melbourne.

Chapter II.

OUR FIRST EXPERIENCES.

OUR first anxiety was, as you may suppose, to see some old friends, who had left England two years before. Having heard they were living in the vicinity of William's-Town, we gained some information as to their whereabouts, and started thither, not on a very pleasant walk across a hot plain, with large boulder stones, and grasshoppers jumping in all directions, reminding one of the proverbial cat on a hot gridiron. Ultimately, after sundry inquiries, we saw in the distance a small stone house with a rough stone wall around it, rudely constructed after the usual manner of colonial fencing. A young man stood looking over the wall, watching us as we made our way, when all at once he hurried into the house, exclaiming "Mrs. P., a

rich gold digger is coming, with such a smart wife." This young man was a near relative of mine, who had left the occupation of mining for a short time, that he might help our friends in their harvest. Guess their surprise when all came to meet us, and the enquiries made for friends at home. There were three daughters, who had come with them from the old country, and two sons who had been born in the colony. We were made very welcome, and treated with great kindness. The talking about friends at home in England appeared as though it would never end; finally the daughters wished to know the fashions prevailing when we left England, what bonnets and dresses were worn, how the hair was dressed, and numerous other things. These young ladies were some short time afterwards married comfortably to captains of vessels.

While staying there we were amused by the large tea cups which were used. Tea was the usual beverage at every meal, and the "damper" too, which was made of

flour, water, and salt mixed together and baked on the hearth. Our friends here gave us much information of the country, what friends were out, and the best method of proceeding. Having stayed some days, we were anxious to know something of our luggage, but found nothing had arrived at its destination! Feeling disappointment we hastened to Sandridge beach, where we found a great many of our passengers camped in tents, houses being very scarce; in fact one place was called "Canvass-Town," and covered some acres of ground. It was most unhealthy, and many of our newly-arrived passengers succumbed to that fearful malady, dysentery, which is very trying in a tropical country.

On the 19th of January, in company with friends, we left Sandridge (now a large town), and proceeded on our way to Melbourne, two miles distant. The heat was intense, and the dust fearful, which made new arrivals disgusted; so much so, that some of our passengers returned home by the same vessel. Expecting

letters awaiting us at the Post-Office, we made our way to a small weather board building, where a great many persons, like ourselves, were waiting their turn, and this occupied some hours. We little thought at the time that a miserable, dirty, and for the most part weather-board place, would rise to such importance, and prove worthy of being called the finest city in the Southern hemisphere.

We were now desirous of finding, if possible, a home, and passing up and down several streets, we observed the word "Lodgings," in a window. I was unwilling to go in; however we entered and had to pass through a room where there were many dirty-looking men, but this was the only entrance. A woman desired us to follow her up stairs into a most uncomfortable back bed-room, with no furniture. Our luggage being landed on the wharf, we engaged this room at 10s. 6d. per week, paid in advance, or a deposit. We had gone but a short distance from this domicile, when we were met by two of our passengers. Their

enquiry was, "Where are you going to live?" and upon our telling them, their answer was, "Why that is the place we were going to, for goodness sake don't go there, for that is a house of bad repute."

The consequence was, we forfeited the 10s. 6d., but were pleased at meeting some of our near neighbours on board ship, who informed us that they had engaged a room at Richmond, a mile and a half from Melbourne, but in the meantime they had resolved to go to the diggings, which at that time presented a most exciting scene. We accordingly were glad of the chance, and engaged the room which they had relinquished. It was a boarded house of three rooms, badly built. The only furniture our room contained was a colonial stump bedstead, for which we paid 25s. per week! with wood and water, which had to be used with the greatest economy. The price of a bullock dray of wood uncut was £5, and a horse load £2 10s. The water from the river Yarra-Yarra was sold in barrels at 15s. and 10s. per load. No

other could be obtained when we arrived, and it was not unusual to see animals that had been drowned floating down this river, the banks being so precipitous that when cattle went to drink they could not possibly save themselves. I have witnessed during a heavy flood, wooden houses floating down the stream, into the bay, with cats and fowls sitting upon the roof, with no way of getting off.

In 1863, during a heavy flood, the water had risen above the shallow banks of the Yarra and rendered it dangerous for persons to walk through the lower streets of Melbourne, such as Elizabeth-street, which divides the city, with a hill on each side. Horses and carts were employed to carry passengers across the street, and so strong has been the current at times that many persons have been swept away during the floods referred to, and on the opposite side of the Yarra, a vast sheet of water stretched for miles. Boats were plying over the tops of houses, with some of the chimneys discernible, and for days the traffic to the principal

townships near the beach was stopped. The great novelty of the river Yarra-Yarra, after a few years, was the launching of their first little pleasure steamer, the "Gondola." Many parties took advantage of this slow little boat, by taking trips to the Botanical Gardens, so beautifully laid out, on the right side of the river. Further on to the left was Richmond, where G. Coppin, Esq., had expended a large sum of money in improving and beautifying a piece of waste land, to gratify the desires of the public. This was called "The Cremorne Gardens," and on summer evenings was the resort of thousands of persons. Many amusements were indulged in, such as the storming of Sebastopol, gymnastics, and theatrical exhibitions. Altogether these gardens were tastefully laid out with grottoes, Chinese lanterns, ornamental water, &c., and but for the pest of mosquitoes, pleasant evenings would have been passed. Many were the unlucky slaps given on the hands and face, with the view of killing them, but with little effect.

As an instance of mosquito acquaintance I may mention the case of a lady newly arrived from England visiting me for a short time, during her husband's absence at Castlemain. She, feeling a wish to spend a few days at Collingwood with some friends, took leave of me. To my great surprise, she returned, and after looking at her for some time, I told her I really had not the pleasure of knowing her. "What! forgotten me in a week! It cannot be," she replied. Again I informed her most positively that I did not know her. "What, not Mrs. Cook?" she exclaimed. I roared with laughter, and could not help it, though it vexed her. Every time I looked at her, the appearance of her face reminded me of an immense pudding, with her eyes like two peas. Looking at me for a few minutes, she burst into tears, saying "Oh, what will George say when he sees me look so ugly." I consoled her by advising her to keep her fingers from off her face. "How can I?" was her reply, "with all this irritation." However, persevering for

some time, her features resumed their natural appearance, luckily before the arrival of her husband. She then accompanied him back to Castlemain, where she hopes to be free from such horrible tormentors as mosquitoes. I am doubtful, however, whether her expectations were realized, there being but few places in Australia where one is free from some disagreeable insect or reptile.

Returning to our first residence in Richmond, we could not boast of any furniture but such articles as were constructed out of portions of luggage. Everything was very expensive, and so we had to be like our neighbours, satisfied for a time, with such things as we could get. Being somewhat settled in this new colonial home, I came to the conclusion of making my first attempt at washing, having paid 27s. for three dozen, which was an exorbitant price, to say nothing of the things being spoilt. I thought to myself, this will not do, I must try what can be done. My landlady, proposing that we should assist each

other, to her great annoyance, found I could do but little: rubbing my wrists instead of the clothes. I could not help crying, when I saw what a complete novice I was in a rough country. To make matters worse, the good woman told me such folks as could not do all sorts of work were best at home, along with their fathers and mothers, if they had any. I thought the best way to propitiate her was to prepare the dinner for herself and children, and she was contented to finish the washing. I was sorry not to be more domesticated and prepared for the ups and downs of colonial life, for such it was in those days. By degrees I became accustomed to hardships and troubles, and found it of no use to sit down and fret, but bore up with good courage, although difficulties and troubles were very great for the first few years.

After living at Richmond a few weeks, my husband was seized with dysentery, then very prevalent. For some weeks he was under medical treatment in Melbourne, whither he would go daily, the

fees being 10s. 6d. per visit; but as after a little time he was unable to walk, I suggested fetching the doctor, and so, leaving home early, one Sunday morning, with a fearful hot wind blowing, I reached Dr. Motherwell's, and begged him to come and see my husband, not expecting to find him alive on reaching home. His reply was, "I have too much to do at home; there are doctors here, there and everywhere," and he shut the door in my face. This deeply grieved me, and I turned away with a heavy heart. As I walked along Collins-street, I saw the name of "Dr. Campbell," on a door; a gentleman I had heard my brother speak of some years before. Wondering whether he would behave more kindly, I made enquiry if the doctor was at home, but it now being early, he had not come down stairs. Upon entering the dining-room, I was pleased to see an easy chair, wherein I relieved my suffering and anxiety by weeping bitterly for some minutes. The doctor on entering the room was astonished to see me in that position, unable to speak.

He advanced towards me, and putting his hand on my shoulder, said "Come my little girl; what is the matter?" I told him of the unkindness Dr. M. had shown me. "Never mind," he replied, "I will be there as soon as possible;" so, ordering his horse immediately, he was soon on his way to Richmond. I fancy I can see that good man now, riding as fast as possible through the scorching sun, dressed in white pants, silk Alpaca coat, cabbage-tree hat, with white puggery flying in the wind. He was indeed a kind friend, and three times daily did he attend upon his patient without asking a fee! Through his unwearied attention his patient became, after a time, convalescent.

I did not escape this malady myself, but suffered terribly, for a few weeks, having to attend my husband at the same time. I made myself a bed on the boards with blankets, which was hard enough, but no such luxury as feather beds was to be had, neither did I see one during the whole time I was abroad; nothing but

mattresses were used in hot climates. During this trouble an old friend, formerly from England, hearing of our arrival in the Colony, was anxious to see us, but was some time before he could find where we were located. Fortunately I was cleaning my window, when to my greatest delight I saw this friend riding past on his horse. I flew down like one liberated from prison, ran to the door, and was overwhelmed at the thought of meeting an old friend in a foreign country, and among strangers! He was greatly distressed at seeing the trouble I was in, and my husband reduced as it were to a skeleton; there was no avoiding trouble, and our few friends who would console, were miles from us.

At this time all was excitement through that great mania of gold-seeking, when everyone was bent on trying their good or ill luck at places which have since become the principal townships in Victoria, Australia. Our kind friend before mentioned had the good fortune to be classed with lucky individuals, and

he realized £600 in six weeks. He then entered into partnership with a Mr. P., at Forest Creek, carrying on business as storekeepers, where they were successful in accumulating large fortunes. Before his returning to the country we experienced the greatest kindness from him, and he did not lose the opportunity of introducing me to a sister of his, residing not far off. This I appreciated greatly, I felt I had once more some one to confide in, while in this lonely state. Troubles, we are told, do not come singly, and as an illustration of this I may mention that no sooner had I experienced her friendship than she, like many more, was called to her long home, leaving a widower and small family. Finding the situation of their home not healthy, they removed a short distance away.

Through becoming acquainted with this family I met with other arrivals from home (Orwell); their residence was situated at Prahran, near Melbourne. This family consisted of husband, wife, son and daughter, and having accumu-

lated some few pounds, they speculated in buying an acre of ground, and built a four-roomed cottage upon it, composed of whattle and plaster, which cost them a trifling sum, the ground being obtained nearly for the trouble of clearing it of the timber. It proved, however, in time, to be valuable property, and having succeeded in making a small market garden, situated near the city, they sold the produce to advantage. A melancholy accident happened to this poor woman. The custom of the country then was to bake their food in a camp oven, hanging over the fire, and by placing hot ashes upon the lid. She, wishing to replenish her fire, hastened into the garden to gather some small scraps of wood in her hand, when, after a short time, she complained to her husband how the venomous red-gum wood had poisoned her hand. The swelling increased greatly, and upon the arrival of the doctor the next day, he found that she had been bitten by a centipede. The poison had communicated to all parts of the body, life was

despaired of, for days she was delirious, and caused great anxiety to her family, and for a long time she herself suffered fearfully. With strict attention she was partially restored to health, but the arm became contracted, which caused inconvenience in her domestic duties. Her husband dying a short time after, left her in tolerably good circumstances, with a comfortable home, for those days, and situated within an easy distance of the river Yarra-Yarra, where the family might avail themselves of a trip by the little steamer to Melbourne.

After living some months at Richmond, we thought of making a change for a new home. We found it a difficult task to meet with anything approaching comfort, that was an after consideration. There was no choice, and my readers will be amused with the description of the "Match Box," as we termed it, containing two rooms, and being one of four cottages, situated on the slope of Richmond Hill. For this modest abode we paid the enormous rent of £104 per annum, or £2

per week! This place was built of hard Tasmanian timber (deal wood was sold at 8d. and 1s. per square foot). The boards of the cottage were in some places a quarter of an inch apart, and the wind in the cold weather cut through the crevices in a very unpleasant fashion while our friends were sitting around the blue gum fire, wearing their great coats and shawls, and with colonial bellows, formed out of a sheet of newspaper, each one fanning alternately to keep the fire burning. Though this was an employment which was not very enviable, yet when once in a good blaze, the fire was quite cheerful and pleasant; for, the wood being so durable, it would burn like coals. The latter choice article in those days had to be imported from England and Scotland as ballast, no one desiring to explore the country for such a useful commodity, although an abundance could be obtained within an easy distance of Sydney, where at the present day there is an immense coal mine, and also in different parts of Victoria and New South Wales.

Chapter III.

MAKING ACQUAINTANCES.

WISHING to see a little of the suburbs of Melbourne, we strolled through the Government Reserve, and there we met with some old ship friends—Mr. H., formerly a barrister in London, with his three sons, whom he took out to settle. They were very delighted to see us, and, like ourselves, complained of every inconvenience in a rough country. Often would the old gentleman on board ship rub his hands and take his pinch of snuff, saying "how delightful it would be to taste once more, on land, of leg of mutton and caper sauce." We thought this a good opportunity of realizing his wish, and so we invited them the following week to come and dine with us. We were puzzled not a little how to construct

a table for such a party, when Mr. H. suggested we should borrow a door and trussels of our next neighbour, a carpenter. He, however, did not much fancy the idea of lending but at last he gave his consent, saying "wal, if you have it, you must pay the damage."

On the day of our guests' visit this apology for a table was brought, and the arrangement of our "dining table" was an affair of no small trouble and amusement. After placing two books upon the trussels to make the sides horizontal, I spread my damask table-cloth, and having arranged other requisites (Mr. H. cautioning the company not to scratch the legs of the mahogany), we had not proceeded far with our dinner, when one of our company put his boot near the trussel, and alas! down slipped the dishes containing our much talked of repast, and each one caught hold of something or other in the general confusion. However, after sundry efforts and great amusement, we succeeded in completing a good dinner, fortunately without injuring the good

man's colonial table. Scarcely had we finished our meal, when, looking overhead, we were horrified by seeing an immense spider, nearly as large as the hand, crawling leisurely along, as if surveying our doings. I suppose he had just awoke from his sleep, as they only feed once in two or three weeks, then crawl again to their beds. None of our company dare touch this ugly creature, but calling to an old colonist to give us some information about it, he coolly said "Oh, its only a 'triantilope'" (meaning a "tarantula,") and, asking for a cloth, he quickly caught hold of this horrible spider, and destroyed it by crushing it with his boot underfoot. It was fortunate for us that we perceived it, as the venom from this insect is deadly, and had any of us been bitten it might have proved fatal to inexperienced persons like ourselves.

The tarantula was not the only annoyance; there were centipedes, and large ants an inch in length, which are very fierce when attacked. I have seen persons put a stick into the earth, which they

have thrown up three or four feet in height, and it is really curious to see the ants swarm up and down the stick, trying every scheme to sting you if possible, and if they do succeed the pain is not easily forgotten. The small black ant is also a great pest, getting into bags of sugar, jams, or anything sweet. When they find any luxury they will travel a long distance, fetching their neighbours by thousands. The smell from these little creatures was very unpleasant, neither could anything be eaten where they had frequented. The remedy I used was to pour boiling water in their tracks; afterwards they would busy themselves carrying away their dead, having great fights to conquer. I have spent many minutes watching the ingenuity of these little insects, toiling up and down over the top of the house or any place they determine on, particularly if houses were like our own, without lining or paper.

Writing of houses reminds me that in ours at this time a space near the chimney was open, and when an old lady

and her husband came to inspect it (on our leaving), she exclaimed, "look my dear, we can lie in bed and count the stars, I'm sure we darn't come, we shall catch our death a'cold and die. Oh, look at the rent, too, £2 per week, its awful; a quartern loaf, 1s. 8d.; butter, 4s. per lb.; eggs, 8d. each; fowls, 12s. and 14s. per pair; and a duck, 16s.; mutton and beef is the only thing reasonable, which is 6½d. and 7d. per lb. We have been out" she said "five months from home, and only had beef and mutton. What stupid old people we must have been to come to a country like this, but never mind, we have a son here, and he must take care of us if he can, for he is a good boy, and if all children were as kind as he, parents might be thankful." As this worthy couple resided but a short distance from us, we became on friendly terms, and this continued for the period of our living at Richmond which place improved by having more comfortable houses, and persons of higher class were now more frequently met with, both here and at Melbourne.

Chapter III.

HOW THE DREAM WAS REALIZED.

IF we had an occasion to go to Melbourne we perchance might be gratified with an introduction to some friends from England. As an instance of this, business calling me to the city, and prior to entering a chemist's shop in Swanston Street, I was greatly perplexed by seeing a young man dressed in policeman's clothes, scrutinizing me, and following me into the shop. Tapping me on the shoulder, he enquired if I was Mrs. A., from Cambridge. As I indignantly answered him in the affirmative, he begged me not to be alarmed, for he was "only Tom B." (His father had formerly conducted a gentleman's school in Cambridge). Upon my leaving the shop, I found him waiting again to speak to me, but not liking the idea of talking to him in the street, I

diggings, engaging bullocks and drag, which was the manner of conveying goods to the country. Passing through the Black Forest, which is some miles across, each had to take their turn in watching the bullocks at night, making up a large fire. When Mr. S.'s turn came, with others of the party, to watch, to their great dismay they lost their bullocks, which had strayed some distance, and in the search for them they lost themselves. Mr. S., knowing no other resource, climbed a tree and began crying, thinking he had come to an untimely end, but was overjoyed in seeing the search party coming to his aid. This disaster terminated Mr. S.'s excitement for gold.

This was not the only instance in which those who had made their way to the diggings would, upon returning, spend their money lavishly; perhaps they would call at an hotel for a short time, and present the innkeeper with £50, saying "When you want more old fellow, let us know," adding that they lighted their pipes with bank notes. This innkeeper,

named Sheedy, an Irishman, lived but a short distance from us, and only a year and a half previous was a poor man; he was extremely ignorant, unable to read or write, but possessing the invaluable quality of perseverance, he was now worth £20,000. He had been offered £500 per annum for his hotel, with the goodwill of the business, which he refused; he was also the owner of a weather-board house, let for £400 per annum. Carpenters were earning 25s. per day, smiths and bricklayers, 30s. per day; and wages at that rate would make house rent very high. Some years before the emigration to Australia, an old gentleman designated "Parson Docker," once a clergyman at home, was at the time I mention, a rich squatter, or owner of a large cattle station in New South Wales. This energetic man purchased around the suburbs of Melbourne many acres of land, at a very low price. As the gold mania increased, he sold and built upon the land, in sections, very comfortable houses, of four and six rooms each, nicely lined and

papered. Bricks were sold at £30 per thousand, imported from the old country, and, as anyone may suppose, good houses were spoiled for the want of chimneys; so American stoves with long iron pipes were chiefly used for the sake of economy. Brick-yards in a short time opened and employed a great number of men, to the entire satisfaction of those who could afford to purchase a piece of land, thus saving them an enormous rent. As we were unfortunate through illness, on our first arrival in the colony, we had to be contented with hiring a four-roomed house, situated in Docker Street, named after the owner. They were let at £3 per week. A vacant space was left at the back and front of the house, for small gardens. As they were not fenced in, great mistakes were made, particularly at evening time, by neighbours walking into the wrong houses. The minister's wife, who lived beside me, was very liable to this mistake. One morning, at breakfast time, she came marching in at the kitchen door, exclaiming, "Oh, Bessie, where did

you get those two beautiful cats?"—mistaking me for her daughter. To her great surprise she looked around, saying, "Oh dear, I am in the wrong house again, just like my careless husband, he is always acting in the same foolish way, people must think us very stupid."

While living in Docker Street, one of the most fearful dust storms, known as "Black Wednesday," alarmed us much. It is quite impossible to give my readers a full description of what we witnessed. The heat was distressing, the greater part of the day. The sun was obscured, and darkness came upon us at noon. Nothing could be observed but the rolling and crashing of movables outside the houses. The noise was deafening. My neighbours ran to me in a state of frenzy, crying, with their children clasped about them. Fearing to leave the house, we huddled into one corner of the room, really thinking a Biblical prophecy was coming to pass. During this consternation we were greatly alarmed (when the darkness had passed) by seeing a strange-looking man

enter the door and take off his hat, which was coated with dust. About the face he resembled one of the aborigines, excepting the white stripes here and there, caused by perspiration, and some cuts made by small stones. This odd-looking stranger proved to be my brother; he had left home early that morning for Sandridge, some miles away, to visit his former Captain, who was returning to Europe. On his return he was overtaken by the fearful storm mentioned, and obliged to seek shelter behind the large trees in the Government Reserve until he saw an opportunity of leaving his retreat.

Only a short period had elapsed after the above visitation, when we were visited by a severe earthquake. It lasted a few seconds, occasioning three successive "bumps." Thinking I should be thrown out of bed, I arose quickly, calling to my brother to know the meaning of all the confusion, for a heavy rumbling was soon heard, reminding me of a heavily-laden American waggon passing rapidly along the road. Looking out of my window at

daylight (which I was long watching for) a spectacle presented itself of fallen chimneys and places that were slightly built; also a great number of cups, plates, and other breakables, was observed on the ground. Many inquiries the next morning, were made about escapes from the disaster of the previous night. Among those calling was a lady I knew in Cambridge some few years before. She was the wife Mr. McCoy, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Melbourne. They had left Belfast, Ireland, recently, bringing with them their household furniture, and lived in luxury compared to many arriving at that time. They had hired a house, not far from our own, where we often indulged a few leisure minutes in talking over reminiscences of past days. This was very pleasant in a foreign land. The family consisted of a son and daughter, two only surviving after they left Cambridge. Miss McC. was a fine young lady, and in due time was considered the belle of Melbourne; also one of the guests at the fashionable ball, given

in honour of the Duke of Edinburgh, when making his tour through the Australian Colonies.

The University was progressing favourably, and by the aid of scientific architects, was pronounced one of the finest buildings in Melbourne. Visiting Mrs. McCoy, I found the professor busily employed designing their garden, situated upon a gentle rise, and overlooking the city, which was thought to be very picturesque. The Cemetery also was within an easy walk from the University, and tastefully laid out in flower beds, &c. On Sunday afternoon, when there was but little to be seen elsewhere, it was quite the resort for visitors.

Those who have not seen a Chinese funeral would look upon it as a strange procession. The coffin, without any pall, is placed upon two pieces of rope, with two bamboo sticks put through, and carried (sometimes a very long distance) on the shoulders of four Chinese. They trot along in their usual way, followed by several of their own countrymen, carrying

brandy, preserved ginger, chow-chow, pork, fowl, lanterns, and such necessaries as they think will be required by the departed on his journey—to what place they believe in, I am unable to say. As a natural consequence the graves are often desecrated by people of other nations, and robbed of the contents.

The Chinese Tartars who frequent foreign countries for the most part are great thieves, and will not hesitate in appropriating things which they desire for their own use, especially poultry. They are very ingenious, imitating whatever they fancy. Their wood-carving and inlaid work is greatly admired, and many of them are looked upon as a persevering and industrious race, living where the British would starve. Rice, boiled in a manner so that each grain separates, is eaten with two sticks, which are called "chop-sticks." The Chinese cabbage was cultivated extensively in Victoria. It is a peculiar-looking vegetable. After sowing, it grows up in remarkably quick time. The leaves, transparent, were thought a

good substitute in warm weather, when every blade of grass or vegetable was parched up with the scorching sun. When living in the country, I bought some of the cabbage mentioned, of John, the Chinaman (they are all called John). I boiled them in the usual manner, but they were insipid and disagreeable to the taste. A few days passed, and John called again, trotting along with his bamboo sticks and baskets across his shoulders. I told him his cabbages were no good: "Velly good, mum, You know savee how to cookee." Asking me for basin and water, he carefully took off each leaf, washed and dried them well, cutting them in pieces, he threw them into a pan with a small portion of water, butter, pepper and salt, simmering them together. This was very palatable. Thanking John for his instruction, he departed, saying "Our Chinese ladie not come to this country, their feet be so leetle, they no walkee far."

Cutting the hair forms a part of the Chinese religion. On the crown of the head, the hair is never allowed to be cut,

which makes it a great length. This they braid and twist (often with silk) around the head many times. Sometimes they will leave it hanging, and it occasionally reaches the ground. I have been informed when they have committed any grave offence they are punished by having the hair taken off, and, in consequence, dare not return to their own country. The Chinese New Year is also looked upon by themselves as a great festival; strange sounds of music are heard, also marching in procession, with a large pig, cooked whole, until it is of a dark brown colour, and decorated in various coloured ribbons. This they carry on their shoulders, placed on a large tray, or piece of board, and convey it to their Jos House (or sanctuary). Here they reverence the sun, moon, stars, Jos, and also a great many ugly-looking images. Formerly it was considered very degrading for Europeans to marry the Chinese, but of late years it has become more general, as many have been fortunate in becoming wealthy.

Two years had rapidly passed since our first arrival in the colony, when to my great surprise I was visited by Mr. K., the relative whom I met with on my first landing in Victoria. He, like many young men, had been trying his fortune on the goldfields, suffering greatly from illness, and every privation. He resolved, should he ever recover, to leave for the old country directly. This he came to apprize me of, by saying "My passage money is paid for my journey home. I leave to-day by the ship *Kent*. How I do wish you could go too; but I know you cannot. I have nothing to give you for a remembrance of your cousin William but this half dime" (2½d. in American money). Taking it from his pocket, he bored a hole in it, and placed it on my watch chain, telling me he had brought it from America, thence to England, afterwards to Australia, and on my return to the mother country, the little coin was again a traveller homewards. As the weather was fine and agreeable, I took the opportunity of accompanying Mr. K. on

his way towards Melbourne, prior to his embarking for home. Before parting he spoke of two or three friends from his native place (Ashwell), whom he left mining. He did not mention their circumstances, neither did I hear any further of them during my residence in Australia.

After leaving my relative, I thought on my way homewards I would prolong my walk in a different direction, and see what progress the little township had made, since our residence there. The neat church of blue stone, situated at Richmond, on the summit of the hill, had a pleasing effect. The interior was fitted up with every mark of comfort, and a good organ was placed in the western gallery. The attendance generally was large, consisting of all the leading and wealthy families in the neighbourhood. The Rev. T. C. Perks was the first incumbent, and has fulfilled his duties more than thirty years with energy and success. Once he accompanied, as chaplain, the late J. Thos. Smith, Esq., many years

vessels in harbour. To make this tale rather more romantic, two Russian gentlemen of high distinction were lodging in Docker Street, and when they heard the report spread about the streets of their countrymen coming to take possession, they laughed heartily, exclaiming "the English need not fear our Russians coming to take Melbourne; they have plenty to do at home."

Chapter IV.

AT THE GOLD DIGGINGS.

LIVING some years in the suburbs of Melbourne, we contemplated a removal to Ballarat, the great mining district. There was no railway to this important town; the journey of seventy miles had to be accomplished by coach, through part of the country where the rain had been falling for days, causing all the water-courses to rise a considerable height. We passed through the small townships of Baccus-Marsh and Ballan. At the latter place we took breakfast. The passengers were all men save myself, and they had no alternative but to walk sometimes half a mile at a time, where the land was flooded, and to descend precipices which were really frightful to behold. Even in a rough country the

passengers had marks of politeness, and were considerate enough to tell me, when they left the coach, not to look out of the window for fear of alarm. Had I done so, nothing would have prevailed upon me to have kept my seat, and I should have shared the same fate as themselves, in respect of several immersions, walking often up to the knees in water. When once on the dry level plain, crack! went the coachman's long whip, and away dashed the coach again, up hills and down slopes, avoiding the trunks of trees and occasionally felled timber, as if by a succession of miracles. This was one of the ubiquitous "Cobb's Coaches," that did the entire distance between Sydney, the capital of New South Wales, and Melbourne, the capital of Victoria, a distance of five hundred and seventy-seven miles, at full gallop, with forty-eight relays of horses, in sixty-four hours, including stoppages; the greater part of the way was through the open bush, with no visible token of a road whatever. Passing through the forest of Bullarook, we came

near the famous mountain Warrenheip (quite a land mark) and thickly studded with timber.

The following summer we witnessed this fine mountain in one mass of flames, burning for days, and at night it was a grand spectacle, lighting up the country for miles. Presently we reached Ballarat, and a very odd and strange appearance it had to one who had never seen the gold-fields, the earth being perforated in all directions, and large heaps of clay, &c. seeming to cover its surface. Men were employed at various occupations, some working at a windlass, some at the puddling machine, others washing the gold through a so-called cradle; all was excitement on the well-known and rich mining district of Ballarat. Great cheers were given as the coach and four brave horses dashed along the rugged road. Well might the *Melbourne Punch* in caricature, represent the Ballarat coach, with passengers seated, the coach top level on their shoulders, and their heads looking out at the top. I was glad to reach the end of

that unpleasant journey, and did not care to move for days; however the fatigue passed off, and, in company with some friends, I went to visit the "township" (as it was called) on the rising part of the town. Here the church, hospital, cemetery, and public buildings were situated. The main road was formed with planks of wood, placed at an equal distance from each other, whereon the vehicles jolted along, and in many places had broken through, where the diggers had been excavating. To all appearance there was scarcely a patch that had not been worked over by a tin dish or in some other form. It was at Ballarat where the Duke of Edinburgh, in 1873 (also his nephews, sons of the Prince of Wales, recently) descended a shaft of 450 feet in depth. The claim had been open more than 20 years, and still continues rich in quartz reefing.

Many Chinese had congregated here fresh from their own country. I was quite shocked at the odd formidable appearance of these strange-looking

people, attired in their national dress, but they were not long before they soon assumed the manners and customs of the digger. Here they had a large Chinese camp, where they kept upwards of a hundred pigs, and would not hesitate to steal another, although having plenty.

My readers will perhaps be amused at the contents of a letter received from my brother, which ran as follows :—

"*On the Ovens Gold-fields, Victoria.* In the month of October, 1853, I joined a party of four others at the Duke of York, in Melbourne, where we severally entered into a written agreement to proceed to the Ovens. Taking provisions and tools for three months, at the end of which the party might be broken up or continue, as might be agreed on. We arrived on the diggings after 21 days journey, walking the whole distance, the dray being heavily laden. We paid £140 per ton for carriage. Many incidents and freaks that occurred on the road I have not forgotten, such as being stuck in bogs two or three times in the

day, and having to unload the horrible dray, up to my middle in mud and water. Perhaps the blankets would fall in and lie soaking for a quarter of an hour, and at night have to turn in on them, lying on the ground, where it had been raining every day for a week before! These little things, I can assure you, made me wish the diggings at the very mischief long before I was half way there; in fact many a one we met on the road turning back; still we persevered, and finally reached the diggings,—that is, our party.

Just as we were leaving Melbourne, a Mr. B. (a very new chum) wished us to accommodate him by his going with us, not as one of our party, but on his own account. Well, we agreed to let him, on his paying for his share of the carriage of provisions, &c., but he had a wife, and when she heard he was going to the diggings, she would go too; of course, we were not so ungallant as to refuse her, but wished at the same time she had stayed behind. We told her she would be obliged to walk all the way; but she

replied she did not care (she was a fine-looking woman of 21 years of age). The first few days it was beautiful travelling; after that rain set in, and she was often up to her knees in mud and water; still she pushed through it all. At length it rained very hard, and we had to stop on the road two days. When we did start the roads were in a dreadful state, and on coming to a swamp called 'Pretty Sally's,' we found it completely flooded for three-quarters of a mile. The water being two or three feet deep, of course we men had no alternative but to wade through it, and put Mrs. B. on the top of the dray; 'Oh, ye fates! how could ye be so cruel?' The dray had proceeded nearly half way across the swamp, when "flop" went the wheels into a deep hole! In vain we endeavoured to get the dray out; the more we tried the deeper it got, therefore 'unload' was the word. Poor Mrs. B., what was to be done with her? No one offered to carry her, not even her husband, for he was jolly tired of her; therefore she, like ourselves, was under the necessity of

tucking up her clothes, and wading through it, which she did, after one or two overhead immersions! This satisfied her about the diggings, and on the following morning we fell in with an empty dray, returning to Melbourne, into which we packed both Mr. and Mrs. B.

We reached the diggings in November, and the first thing we did on the following day was to take a 'claim'—that is, a piece of ground 12 feet square, and the next day we turned to work, but a more stupid lot never came on the diggings than ourselves. We worked (in our way) hard, and finally came on the washing stuff, and found it contained a good deal of gold. We worked it for about three weeks after, and took out 6½ lb. weight of gold. We fancied we had achieved great things, and gave the hole up to some other men, who in 8 days took out 27 lb. weight, 17 lb. weight, 13 lb. weight, and 9 lb. weight; gold being sold at £4 per ounce.

Thus, you see, had we known anything about gold-digging our fortunes were

nearly made in the first hole. After this my mates became abominably lazy, and cared more for smoking, &c. than working, and at the end of the three months we sold off everything and divided the spoil, which, believe me, was but trifling, as everything was sixes and sevens after finding out that we had thrown away the richest claim then known on the diggings. I then joined a person of the name of De Cantreal, whose brother was a solicitor in Melbourne. We worked together a short time, when he was seized with typhus fever (at that time very prevalent here) and in a few days carried him to his long home. Poor fellow, I was very sorry. Afterwards I joined a man from Sydney, a first-rate digger, from whom I derived much information relative to digging, washing, &c., &c. We did very well together, sometimes getting three ounces per day ; but as he had been to Bendigo and made a large sum of money, he went to Sydney to spend the winter with his relatives.

I then joined a new mate. We were

washing some stuff, and as it laid on a high hill (a cart could not get it) we were under the necessity of putting it in sacks and carrying it on our backs to the creek, when in lifting or rather throwing a bag of it over his back he unfortunately dislocated his shoulder, which laid him up for some time. However, I could now sink, tunnel, puddle, wash, and tin dish, with any man on the auriferous soil of the Ovens. I must say I have not done well as a digger, because I was inexperienced; still I am pleased to say I have always a few ounces in my pocket, and hope ere I leave this to make something that will repay me for my hard labour, for hard labour it is. Many a hole 40 feet deep have I sunk without getting a pennyweight of gold; 'Nil desperandum,' perhaps I may fall on it some day. It is very expensive living here; I am sure I live as economically as anyone possibly can do; do not even have a glass of grog once a week, only tea and coffee, and it costs me between three and four pounds per week. Therefore one is obliged to

work hard, or he would stand a chance of going to bed hungry.

Of course you have seen a few specimens of the digger in Melbourne. But to see him at home, you should see him on the diggings; boots to the middle, blue and red shirt, and a red cap, complete the digger's toilet; combs, brushes and razors—even my head has been a stranger to them for weeks. Rough, ready and willing is the digger's badge; jolly as a cricket, living on the delicacies and every dainty in his power, to be obtained by him on the diggings: fresh salmon, 8s. per lb.; sardines, 6s. per box; French plums, 5s. per lb. In fact, every delicacy that money will buy is purchased with avidity, and without a remark at the price. He pays £7 10s. per gallon for brandy, adulterated with goodness knows what, and nearly as weak as water. Fancy on Sundays seeing little children running into stores for 5s. worth of lollipops! Yes, these purchases are more numerous than halfpenny-worths in England. At this time the diggers are very merry, as

many of them are washing their stuff. I know several who have from 40 and even 150 loads of stuff that will average five and six ounces per load. You may say their fortune is made, but wait awhile; perhaps in two months from this they will be returning to the diggings without £5 in the world; mind I say some, not all of them. I knew a young man lately, who had been washing up, and had 70 ounces. In the evening he went to a sly grog shop (as they are called here) and played cards (an Irish game 25s.) They commenced at 2s. 6d. the game, and £15 bet on the colour of the card. He came to his tent in the morning with £4, all he possessed of the 70 ounces. He did not care, but turned to digging the next morning as if he had never had the gold.

As an instance of the reckless manner in which they spent their gold, one miner had his horse shod with golden shoes (made by a jeweller named Tofield, formerly of London) and rode him to Melbourne. Many other foolish adventures I could tell you of the kind, but it

would take up more time than I can spare. Once I informed you that I did all my own cooking, washing, mending, &c. Well, my cooking put me in a fix once; I had a fire by a large tree, where I used to cook, and from continually using this tree it became hollow. At one end I used to put my pots and kettles to boil. One day I had invited a friend to dinner, so I came out spicy, gave a plum pudding and a fine ham, put them in separate kettles and placed them under the tree, when, curious to state, just before dinner time the horrible old tree gave a roll over, and crushed my unfortunate kettles under it! We tried to remove them, but all was useless. At last we were obliged to get a pick and shovel and dig them; and when I took off the lid of the kettle that the duff was in, hang me if there was not a kettle of fire instead of water! for the duff bag had taken fire, and we had consequently a boiled-baked plum duff.

So much for my cooking.

Yours, W. F. C.

Spring Creek, Ovens Goldfields."

Chapter V.

AMONG THE NATIVES.

WRITING again of Ballarat—It was a rough place, with many Aborigines (natives) constantly soliciting 'baccee,' spirits, or food of some description. Their clothing consisted of a blanket (given by Government yearly) which they pulled across their shoulders, and wherein the 'gins' (married women) or lubias (single) carry their piccanines (children). They are remarkably ugly, with thick lips, long straight hair, with generally a bone put through their nostril and through the ears. They are thought to be dirty and lazy, constantly roaming from place to place, in company with several dingoes (native dogs). The men are good trackers, and can find anything at a great distance when lost in the bush. They are also good stock riders, when

inclined to be so, and can throw the bomerang and spear with great dexterity, never missing their aim. The women are looked upon by the men as inferior beings, not privileged to eat with them, but they throw them a portion over their shoulders when they have had enough. They sleep in 'mia-mias' that is, brush-wood or small boughs set up to keep off the wind.

On some occasions, such as the king of a tribe dying, they hold a corroboree (a war dance). The men throw themselves about in extraordinary positions around a large fire, while the women sit upon their heels making most hideous noises with bits of wood, by knocking them together. They bury their dead by bending the body and making the head and feet meet; then grease themselves with fat, and paint their nose, forehead and chin with white stripes. Their belief is that 'black fellow die, get up white fellow.'

Ballarat friends were pleased to accompany me to any place they thought of interest. Visiting the township, the seat

of the great quartz mining company, we descended a shaft as far as 80 feet, and, not liking the sensation, we begged to be drawn to the surface again, or we should have gone to the bottom, some 200 feet, which would not have been very pleasant for us to experience. Returning home, we were struck by the unusual appearance of a large weather-board hotel in course of building. We were invited to inspect this place, and were pleased with the convenient manner in which it was fitted up, and upon inspecting the kitchen were greatly amused by an Irish cook superintending the culinary department, with the assistance of a grinning black fellow who was replenishing the fire and lifting the lids to see all was going on in proper order. Under the table sat little Jack, scraping out the contents of a jam pot. Biddy espies him, "Bad cess to you; and is it there you are? What mighty impudence brings you into my kitchen?" demanded Biddy in a shrill tone of anger and authority. "Mother thinks sister has got the whooping cough or mazels,

and she'd thank you for a little jelly," was the reply, with the spoon in his mouth. "Never was there a particular dinner here but some of you *did* get the whooping cough or meazles; but not a morsel of jelly shall you get on this occasion," said Biddy. "Then I daresay some blom-mangee will do as well," said Jack. "Never a bit of blanc-mange shall ye get either; I'd rather give it to the black fellows for a corroboree than to the likes of you. You may tell your mother so, with my compliments. I suppose she's too much of the fine lady to cook now, though I remember the time she prided herself on the boiling of a potato, and for the very good reason, for she'd nothing else to cook. Will ye keep yer little dirty fingers out of the jam pot? and leave off plastering that dirtier face that is the axact image of yer father's, barring the cockle eye; and, bad luck to him, that would send a real downright gentleman to gaol, blaming him for doing a thing he never did." This was roared out by the irate cook all in a breath. 'Will you

make us a rolde-polde pudding, Biddy?' 'No, I'll beat monkey's meat with the rolling pin until its tender this time, by way of a change, ye young ne'er-do-weel,' and brandishing the insignia of her office, the indignant cook chased the young hopeful out of the kitchen into the back yard, where an equally precocious magpie, espying his naked legs, rushed after him, screaming hoarsely 'Who bejavers are you, sir; who bejavers are you?'

Chapter VI.

NATIVE PETS.

THE magpie is a very domestic bird in Australia, and there are many persons who keep tame ones walking and prating about the house, often making use of queer expressions. If they have an aversion to anyone they will be very spiteful, watching an opportunity of giving a good peck, and telling you to get out of the house. They are also very clever in imitating everything within earshot. Large flocks of black and also black and white magpies may be seen congregated in the early morn, chattering and making a great din, while the laughing jackass (or bushman's clock) will not forget to remind you it is time to rise. Many persons in the interior of Australia are very superstitious about their favourite time keeper, and do not like them destroyed, but enjoy the

sound of their peculiar laugh. The parrots are very beautiful, such as the King Parrot, the Blue Mountain, and the Rosella. The last named is a charming bird, the plumage is grand, and when taken young from the nest and brought up by hand, may be taught to speak well. I possessed a pair of those lovely birds for some years, and their chatter was very amusing, passing away many dull hours. Unfortunately they were poisoned by a New Zealand herb called 'tuit,' given to them in mistake.

I was much grieved about losing my favourite pets. After taking them across the Pacific with me, however, to compensate me in some measure for my loss, a friend gave me a nice tame oppossum and a native cat of Australia. This animal cannot be tamed, but is exceedingly pretty, and about the size of a kitten; some are brown and white, others are with black and white spots. Jack, the oppossum, was fond of his companion, and a fine large black English cat, which I had some years, took up his abode with them.

They formed the happy family. The native cat by some means escaped, being so wild. Jack, after losing his native companion, was never in his element again, but generally hid himself in some secret place. I lost him for three days, enquiring of my neighbours if they had seen him, when to my great surprise, one night, he came jumping upon my bed. He had secreted himself in a large basket of clothes during that time. As it is their nature to sleep during the day, Jack at night got tired of his bed, and wanted food. Not knowing the proper treatment of these animals, the great heat in the summer killed him. Valuable rugs are made from the skin of the oppossum.

I soon had another pet. Strolling through the bush one fine morning, a man accosted me, asking if I would have a little chicken which his dog had found a distance off, where there was neither house nor tent for a mile. It was about a day old, and taking it from his bosom, where he had kept it warm, he remarked, 'Oh, its such a funny little thing, I

never did see, but its no use my having it.' So I took the little creature home with me, wrapping it in flannel. When it was full grown, many were the enquiries as to what species it belonged to, and which I was unable to answer. Friends were constantly begging some eggs in order to raise the same kind of bird. This could not be done, as she was of peculiar breed, unknown in Australia. She was, however, valuable to me, because of the large number of eggs she laid, and an excellent little mother for raising large broods of chickens, generally of the game kind. She was a complete tartar, not allowing any animal or strange bird near her; but to me she was very tame, sitting on my lap or shoulder if it were possible to get there. She was very small, with black and white shaded feathers and a round breast, a hump on her back, and tail sweeping the ground like a fan; red eyes, a small red crinkled comb, with black feet and red legs. When she ran to meet me with her little tribe she looked an oddity. After keeping her about four

years, a disease of the eyes spread among fowls, causing blindness; poor little Jenny was literally starved. I should liked to have had the skin preserved if it had been in a proper state.

Chapter VII.

A MEMORABLE JOURNEY.

IT was an autumn evening when, in company with Mrs. S. and her husband, we left Ballarat for Maryborough, a distance of about one hundred miles from Melbourne. We travelled in an open conveyance, hoping to enjoy the beautiful scenery as we passed along. The bright Australian sun, setting amidst clouds of gold and crimson, throws a warm light over hill and vale, until every feature of the semi-tropical landscape is bathed in a mellow haze. After passing Creswicks, a wide table land stretched away to the right and to the left, as far nearly as the eye can reach, a land where the grass is as smooth and green as that of an English park; where also, as in an English park, there is no undergrowth. In the distance the tall peppermint and

dusky shea-oak and iron-bark grow in clusters. The gloominess of their foliage is relieved here and there by the yellow blossoms of golden whattle. Dense forests of red and blue gums rise to the very summit of these high ranges, and through the centre of the park-like plain flows a winding creek, whose rise is in the dark defiles. At first the only living objects visible on the plain are the sheep that everywhere dot it, and close to the creek side was a plaid-shirted, cabbage tree-hatted stockman, who had just brought some cows to water.

In the up-country districts of Australia, as in Spain, even the poor ride horses, and a person of any means at all has generally two or three. Australian horses either amble or gallop, a trot or a walk is to them pretty well unknown; and, as there are few hard roads in the bush whereon to knock out their hoofs, their riders indulge them to the top of their bent. A well-trained stock horse will amble and gallop seventy miles a day for an entire week, without exhibiting any

signs of having been over-ridden, and his long slinging slide is so easy, I am told, that it is quite possible to sl saddle without falling.

We rode along, enjoying th of nature. With the suddenne to Australia, darkness had scene, and yet scarcely darknes when clouds obscure the firma myriad stars that bespangle the hemisphere are so bright that th such thing as darkness; 'tis indeed, that surrounding objects gether lost to sight, and nat seems to sleep, as in colder clim in the present case the glorious tion of the Southern Cross and shone from out the indigo he perfect blaze of glory, with ten l other twinkling stars as attenda From every tree top countless of locusts began to buzz, till t resembled the droning of bagpip from the distance came occasio shrill cry of the mopoke, or the the prowling native dog.

The laughing jackass, with its bray and its peculiar chuckle, reminded us that a change in the scene was taking place. The whole face of nature had assumed a threatening form, leaden clouds hung motionless like vast velvet palls above, and on either side the foliage of the iron-bark, the shea-oak, and the red gum waved in the wind, like plumes of a hearse. The lightning began to flash, and the whole heavens appeared to open. The thunder roared among the distant hills, and the rain came down in torrents. We were drenched, and lost on the plain, with nothing to direct us; but left to the mercy of the poor animal, who was wending his way, not knowing where, through the darkness of that awful night. The lightning gradually became less, and in the distance we could discern a faint light at intervals. Mr. S. raised his voice to the highest bush cry, "cooee, cooee," when shortly we perceived an old Scotchman, with a lantern in his hand, looking out of his shanty.

We were delighted to find we had a

place of refuge for the remainder of the night, miserable as it was, with the rain pouring down inside as well as out. The old man did his best to make us comfortable, asking us in his broad Scotch accent to "take a wee droup of whasky to take out the cowld, for he kenned the lasses must be, such a awfu' night; and ye mon dinna ken where ye had got too." He showed Mrs. S. and myself into a kind of room, with a stump bedstead, and giving us an old shawl, which had been his wife's, to wrap around us, we sat until daylight, tethering the horse near the hut until morning.

We were impatient as soon as possible to proceed on our journey; but alas! the horse had broken his rope and gone. The old man having a son living with him, despatched him in search of his two horses across the plain. After awhile he returned, bringing with him one, and he again sent him off in search of our horse, for the animal being frightened by the tempest had strayed miles away. Of course we were in a very uncomfortable

position, having nothing but our wet clothes upon us, and uncertain when our horse would be found, I thought it better to proceed by coach, which passed the hut a quarter of a mile hence, leaving Mr. S. to follow when the horse was captured. The morning was bright and pleasant, after the terrible storm of the previous night.

Reaching the small town of Clunes, where gold was first discovered, in Victoria, we thought it a very singular-looking place. The coach descended quite a precipice, and the inhabitants, living as it were around the interior of a large basin, the distant hills forming an amphitheatre. The continual din of the large quartz crushing machines made it a very difficult matter to hear each other speaking. Here we changed horses and partook of dinner, but had not an opportunity of visiting the mining operations. Our journey now became mountainous, passing the foot of Mount Greenock and Glasgow, Mc Cullum's creek flowing between these two famous mountains. From the

top of the former, one can see a distance of forty miles. There the cattle graze to their hearts' content upon lovely slopes. Passing through Back Creek we finally reached Maryborough towards evening. We were much pleased with this neat and pleasant little town, and the kindly disposed people located there, particularly at the McIver hotel where we were charmed by a beautiful rosella parrot. This bird would amuse people for hours, chattering and speaking different little ditties which would fill a column of a good-sized newspaper. The proprietor refused a hundred pounds for it. He had also a pet monkey, and it was laughable to hear Poll upbraid the monkey for his thieving, and calling for master "to get a stick and put him out."

My friend, Mrs. S., being very partial to reading, often took a book or newspaper into the garden, seating herself generally upon the stump of an old tree. One morning she heard close to her dress a rustling noise. She arose from her seat and was horrified at seeing a large black

snake twisting about. She ran into the house and gave the alarm, when, behold, they came to search the place a whole nest was found, young and old; some escaped, others were killed or died at sundown. Lucky for us we had not been hurt by them previous to this.

Staying some time at Maryborough, I returned to Melbourne, via Ballarat, Buninghong, and Geelong, a place admired for its scenery. The Barrabool hills and vineyards were visited by many, arriving at Melbourne from Geelong by steamer. At the wharf and streets in connection with the railway was a mass of people, waiting the arrival from the interior of the unfortunate King, sole survivor of the first four explorers (Bourke, Wills, King, and Gray) of the vast continent of Australia, which they had crossed to the Gulf of Carpentaria. On returning three were starved to death at Cooper's Creek, being unable to find the Government depôt, which had been placed a short distance from where they met their untimely end. King, by some means, became acquainted

with the wild natives, who treated him kindly, in consideration of his burning a sore with caustic. After a little time they grew tired of him, and pointed for him to go back; however he kept them in sight. Sometimes they would spear him fish, but when found by the search party he was in a miserable, emaciated state, scarcely able to speak. His medical adviser did not allow him to see friends, and directed him to be kept from the least excitement.

The Government awarded King a pension, and he lived comfortably some years at St. Kilda, a pleasant town and watering-place, near Melbourne.

Chapter VIII.

NEW ZEALAND.

A FRIEND from home proceeding to New Zealand with her husband, was desirous that I should follow as soon as circumstances would allow; hoping my health would improve, for during my residence in Australia latterly, the climate was very trying to my constitution. Bidding farewell to my Melbourne friends, I took passage with a lady, and we shared a cabin in the *City of Hobart* steamship for Otago. The voyage of 1,013 miles was accomplished in 5½ days, about the average time. We found the vessel anything but pleasant for travelling; she was constantly pitching or rolling, and at times nearly on her beam ends. Once I was thrown out of my berth into the middle of the cabin, and fell upon the edge of a bath, and was much hurt,

Numbers of cattle were conveyed between decks, and appeared to suffer extremely, by the noise they were continually making.

We were glad to reach our destination. After entering Otago Heads we were struck with the beautiful scenery as we voyaged on towards Port Chalmers, which is situated 10 miles from Dunedin, the capital of Otago. Passengers were conveyed by rail or steamer, with also a delightful ride by conveyance, where the roads become hilly; the slopes being covered with beautiful forest timber. Dunedin, on my first arrival, appeared not unlike Melbourne in former days. The houses were badly constructed, and the streets were nearly impassable. Conflagrations were of weekly occurrence, but the re-building of fine houses, in due time, caused Dunedin to become a handsome city. It is situated at the foot of a range of hills, whose summits are some thousand feet above the level of the sea, and whence a wide, grand, and interesting view of the peninsula, the bay, and ocean

lies visible. A large number of villa residences now nestle in the sheltered nooks, near the summit of the range. And Dunedin is fortunate in having so elevated a resort within such short and easy access from the streets and offices of the city.

The old Identities (Scotch settlers) are indeed proud of their adopted home; for they were the first Europeans who migrated to the above important place. Prior to the goldfields being discovered in that province, many Scotch families purchased land in abundance. As may be supposed, they were very indignant on seeing so many of other nations pouring into the country, which they thought to monopolize. In time that ridiculous feeling abated, and no doubt they are pleased that some enterprising persons, among themselves, have used their influence in establishing a city of such wealth and importance. The principal streets are Princes' and George Streets, and are upwards of two miles in length. They are very wide, with broad pavements,

and are kept scrupulously clean; no perambulators, or men with pick and shovels are allowed to walk on the foot-paths. The banks, public offices, and shops, and its stately buildings, many of them built on re-claimed ground (contiguous to the bay) would surprise a visitor from the old country. This work employed a great many of the gaol prisoners, and excavating the hills was a work of time. On the whole, Dunedin cannot be called a natural city. The botanical gardens are the great attraction, with their beautiful flower beds, tastefully arranged, also a good collection of birds and water fowl, showing the marks of the great care and attention displayed.

A pleasant walk of a few miles, brings us to the famous reservoir, situated near the ridge of a mountain, where a flat part slopes away downwards, and gathers into the shape of a gully as it falls. It is the head of a mountain stream, which bursts out a little lower, and trickles over mossy stones, and under the shade of fern trees, down the mountain side, which forms the

reservoir, where many persons have the privilege to fish; but much care must be observed, as officials are constantly watching. Two and a half miles from the city brings us to the ocean beach. Crossing over the immense sand hills, up and down, in some places half a mile in width, here and there are openings through these hills, where vehicles can pass to the beach, when the tide is low. A lovely ride may be enjoyed for three miles, or you may ascend a mount in close proximity and view the breakers as they roll in, as it were, mountains high, and with deafening roar, the glorious sun shining upon the spray. A more beautiful sight it is impossible to observe, save the gorgeous sunset at sea, which admits of no comparison.

When the Duke of Edinburgh was on his tour, he honoured Dunedin with a visit for three weeks. The splendid residence of the late J. Jones, Esq., was offered for his reception, also that of the late Honourable Eliot Yorke. His Royal Highness was greatly pleased with the

kind manner in which he was entertained. Many thousand persons availed themselves of the honour of meeting him. His Highness visited the theatre. The races he attended two days, and drove six in hand. On his return to Port Chalmers to join his steamer, he was saluted by Maories in their canoes. Many were desirous of shaking hands with the Queen's son. The Prince giving permission, some of them hastily climbed the side of the steamer with delight, and then there was such a jabbering with those in the canoes as to who should go. The canoe coming in contact with our steamer and that of his Highness, over they all went, men and women, into the water! the canoe capsizing, they were swimming about like fish, under the stern of the vessel. At last they righted themselves, turned the canoe over, got in, and waited for their companions.

The Maories are a fine race of people; they do not resemble the Australians; many of them are intelligent, and quite civilized. Often during holidays in

Dunedin visitors avail themselves of a trip by steam to the Maori Kaik (or village). The kind people often invite them to take refreshment, consisting of beef, mutton, and pork, of which there is a great supply, and it is served up very nicely. While visiting the kaik, at the time I write, there was a solemn gathering of the chiefs, &c. Some years previous a friendly native (a chief) died. To commemorate the event and show respect to the departed, they placed a tombstone in lieu of a wooden bar. A great many tribes assembled, some of them tattooed on the face and forehead, which had a singular appearance. But as their dealings are so much with Europeans, they are not taken the notice of they formerly were.

We had the privilege of inspecting their chapel (of the Wesleyan denomination), a stone building. The inside was neat and clean. It consisted of a high pulpit, a desk which was hung around with a piece of black cloth and fringe, a few seats or pews, and several books,

lying scattered about, printed on the one side in the Maori, and on the other in the English language. They are very devout in their religion, and particular care is taken that their church is not desecrated. A good example might be given to our own country people in that respect. The women of the lower order are clever in weaving baskets, mats, &c., from the flax tree and cabbage tree, both of which grow abundantly. They all follow the European style in dress, and many of the chiefs are rich, sending their children to be educated in England. The half-caste women are considered the finest in the Southern hemisphere. They are very superstitious, and have strange ideas, and are fond of great display in dress, those that can afford it. The men principally follow the avocation of fishing, and supply the town with gropers, barracota, guard fish, &c.; while others take to whaling, and often derive great profit, sometimes making as much as £600 a voyage. It is a dangerous undertaking, but they are accustomed to it from child-

hood. Visiting a whaling station, a stranger is astonished at the process, viz., the hauling in, boiling down for oil, &c. The whale, unlike other fish, has warm blood, and suckles her young, which is named a calf. Many are caught near the coast of New Zealand, which is thought to be the most dangerous part in the world for navigation, occasioned by the many rocks projecting into the sea, and it requires a good seaman to steer his vessel through in safety.

Chapter IX.

MY RETURN TO ENGLAND.

MY occupation being of a sedentary nature (viz., conducting a school), it did not allow of any improvement in my health; and, through the wish of my medical adviser, my own native air was deemed necessary. I reluctantly bid my very kind friends adieu, and embarked at Port Chalmers, with a few passengers, on board the ship *Margaret Galbraith*, via Cape Horn, for England. The voyage was not so agreeable as on leaving home. The captain was very austere, with but little kindness. The passengers were astonished a mutiny did not occur; and were it not for the kind attention of the chief officers, great unpleasantness would have befallen us. The first night after leaving the port we encountered a fearful storm. Nothing was in its place;

the noise of the cable rolling about, and everything that was movable, was deafening, with the shouting of the captain and officers the whole night. The third day was similar; many serious accidents happened. The ship being of iron construction, had flush doors to let off the water. Unfortunately they were left open, and the cook walking across the deck, slipped and fell unconscious. The captain passing, saw, as he supposed, the legs of a pair of trousers slipping through the door into the ocean. Luckily he caught hold of them, when lo! to his great surprise, it was the unfortunate cook. For several weeks the poor fellow kept his bed, and in all probability would be a cripple. Having no surgeon on board, all was left to the skill of the captain. The carpenter also fell, and sprained his wrist, and a sailor sustained injury to the spine. Altogether it was a day of sad events, and to be remembered.

We came round Cape Horn, 4,000 miles, without seeing a sail. The decks were constantly deluged in water, and

Plimsol's mark could not be seen, the vessel being too heavily laden. Yet through all she was a splendid sailing vessel, making a voyage of 16,000 miles in 85 days. After the first month we came into fine weather, and could walk the decks comfortably, and watch the Cape hens, so white and beautifully marked with black spots, and some with stripes, riding apparently on the waves, mountains high, bearing us company for some time. The albatross, with immense wings, then came sailing around the ship, eager to pick up any food which might be thrown overboard. A few of these were caught, and the skins were preserved, which make handsome muffs and tippets for the neck. Whales also were observed at a distance, blowing up great spouts of water. Sharks would also pay us a visit, with their pioneer the pilot fish, while the beneta and dolphins (the latter sailing through the water, the colours being impossible to describe) would chase the flying-fish, which, to escape their enemies, would fly many yards, sometimes falling

upon the deck. They are quickly caught when the wings are dry, and are delicious eating.

Gradually we were leaving behind us those glorious constellations, the Southern Cross and Triangle, which indicated that we were approaching the equator. Here we made but slow progress, scarcely moving for days, and terribly hot. The ocean was as smooth and bright as crystal. Our captain and officers took a cruise in his boat, some distance from the ship, but had returned but a short time, when a blue shark, seven feet in length, came to the side of the ship. A bait was thrown, which he soon devoured. The crew hauled him up to the ship side. The shark continually slashing his body by the side of the vessel. However, they lost no time in severing the head from the body; the open jaws exhibiting three rows of teeth, which looked indeed formidable. The men cut off parts which the passengers desired as curiosities, and the remainder was thrown into the sea.

Leaving the equator we entered the

northern hemisphere, and within a few evenings we observed the north star. As we travelled along, what a contrast to that bright blue sky! We enter a thick mist for four or five days, our vessel carrying lights night and day for fear of coming in contact with other vessels. We were delighted in coming into clear weather as soon as we did, or it might have been disastrous to us, for in looking over the side of the ship, close to the bows, was a large ship, bottom upwards, bearing fast away in a southerly direction. This terribly suggestive spectacle caused a thrilling sensation to us all, as none could tell what had befallen that unlucky vessel, or what poor creatures had been doomed to perish in its precincts. Having wind and tide favourable, we sailed on rapidly, the captain speaking with many vessels, some homeward, others outward bound. It was pleasant when many came within speaking distance. Some were six or seven miles distant, yet the captain was always able to hold conversation, and to enter all communications into his log (or

ship book). We were glad, early one morning, to hear the welcome shout, "land on the starboard bow," and which proved to be the English coast. What a treat to see land after three months on ship! Much care had been taken by the sailors to make the vessel clean, and worthy of inspection. Taking in our pilot off Plymouth we passed up the channel smoothly. The signal was given for a steamer, so that no time should be lost. Our captain was anxious to reach England before his opponent, a challenge having been made in New Zealand prior to leaving. With all the little misfortunes, we came in victorious by several days. I found, as represented ere I left New Zealand, England was not the England of former years.

Closing this small work, I hope it will meet the approval of my friends and other readers, who may be induced to give the necessary short time for its perusal.

WARREN, PRINTER, ROYSTON.